

Notes on the History of Pottawattamie County No. 8

D. C. Bloomer

ISSN 0003-4827

Material in the public domain. No restrictions on use.

Recommended Citation

The Annals of Iowa, 11(2) (Apr. 1873): 423-443

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](#)

of a good farm and a comfortable home. They became the parents of six children, and spent many happy days. While the children were of tender years the father took sick and died, but the mother took charge of the farm and raised the children. After the children got old enough to provide for themselves, she was married again to a man of means and influence, and she was beloved by her children, and honored and respected by all her acquaintances.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY.

by J. C. Bloomer

NO. 8.

AT the January session of the Board of Supervisors, John Bratten was elected chairman for the year 1863, and the following new members took their seats: Perry Reel, from Crescent; J. M. Sigler, from Boomer; Samuel Kirkland, from Rockford; A. M. Battelle, from Knox; and W. W. Wilson, from Macedonia. The proceedings of the Board this year did not extend beyond the usual settlements with county and township officers, auditing claims against the county, and the management of the swamp and school lands. The state tax was two mills, the county tax four mills, and school tax one mill. In June, the Board resolved to contribute towards the expense of suits brought in this and other counties to test the right of the railroads to swamp land situated in the odd sections. The claim of the county to these lands had been set aside by an order of Secretary Thompson, of the Interior Department, and the lands certified to the railroads, which, in spite of all opposition, have continued to hold them. The suits commenced to test the titles were all compromised before being passed upon by the Supreme Court of the United States. In many cases, the county had given a quit-claim

deed to lands in these odd sections, but the money has mostly been refunded to the purchasers.

March 8, 1863, the following city officers were chosen in Council Bluffs: Mayor, J. M. Palmer; recorder, W. G. Crawford; treasurer, D. W. Carpenter; marshal, J. L. Forman; aldermen — H. H. Fields, J. M. Phillips, J. H. Warner, N. S. Bates, John Hammer. Four of the aldermen were republicans; all the others were democrats. The school officers elected on the same day were: President, Samuel Clinton; vice president, Samuel Jacobs; treasurer, C. W. Boyers; secretary, J. S. Hooton; director, John Hammer.

April 18th.—The Sixth Iowa Cavalry, one thousand strong, spent a day in the city, on their way to Sioux City and the seat of Indian hostilities at the north. The regiment made a fine appearance as it marched through the city.

The water in the Missouri river this spring was very low, and navigation quite difficult. In June it hardly averaged three feet. The emigration through the city for the west was very large, and was considerably increased, no doubt, by the fear of a draft, which was then imminent. Persons who took the trouble to ascertain the sentiments of the men passing the river in so large numbers, found them almost uniformly opposed to the prosecution of the war and to the policy of the general government in putting down the rebellion.

The first annual report of the Council Bluffs Branch of the Iowa Sanitary Commission was made in May. It showed a total receipt of three hundred and forty dollars in money and sanitary articles, all of which had been duly forwarded to the soldiers in the field, and for which frequent letters of acknowledgment and thanks had been received and published from time to time.

Curtis Burroughs, of the 29th Iowa regiment, died at Helena on the 5th of May. He was one of the most substantial citizens of the county, and left a prosperous business to enter the army. Among the young men in the army whose

deaths were announced this summer, were: Laurence M. Smith, George W. Fairman, and N. H. Folsom. Young Smith was shot in the head at the battle of Milliken's Bend, and the others died of disease.

September 5th.—Gen. Dodge arrived home on a brief visit. He was received by the military and a large concourse of citizens, and made an appropriate address in reply to one welcoming him to the city.

The enrollment of persons subject to military duty made in August under the laws of the United States, showed six hundred and eleven of the first class and two hundred and sixty of the second class in the county. W. G. Crawford was appointed this fall to take charge of enrollment of militia.

August 6th.—George C. Reed, of Center township, one of the largest farmers in the county, was instantly killed by the kick of a horse. His house was well known as a stage station and stopping-place for travelers. John P. Wagstaff, an old citizen of Council Bluffs, died on the 31st of June.

On the 27th of August a killing frost visited the county, completely destroying nearly all the corn, sorghum, &c., &c. Corn which had been selling at fifteen cents advanced rapidly, and in a few weeks brought fifty cents per bushel, wheat being sold at the same price.

The county fair in September was fairly attended, but the frost prevented any considerable display of agricultural productions. A large breadth of ground was devoted, during this and several succeeding years, to the growth of sorghum, the product of which was extensively used by the people instead of that of the sugar-cane, owing to the high price of the latter.

In October, Joseph Smith, jr., was present at the annual conference of his followers in this county for the first time. The meeting was held on a farm of Mr. Follett, and was largely attended. He has since then made regular annual visits to the county.

In September, the banking firm of Baldwin & Dodge,

consisting of Caleb Baldwin and Nathan P. Dodge, was formed and commenced business. The State Bank, and the long-established firm of Officer & Pusey, comprised the other banking houses in Council Bluffs.

In Crescent township, this year, the nursery and garden of H. S. Terry began to attract attention, and vegetables from it were frequently supplied to the citizens of Council Bluffs. It has been greatly improved and enlarged in subsequent years. Mr. W. T. Batchelor also opened a vegetable garden in Council Bluffs, on which he bestowed a great deal of labor and attention.

The political contest commenced early this year and was vigorously prosecuted to its close. March 7th a democratic club was formed in Council Bluffs, of which Samuel Jacobs was president, which held frequent meetings during the summer. May 30th it was addressed by Gen. A. C. Dodge, then on his way to Montana. The delegates to the democratic state convention were: L. W. Babbitt, J. P. Casady, S. H. Riddle, and Wm. Baker.

Union Leagues were this year established by the Union republicans in the county. The one at Council Bluffs proved to be a powerful political organization, and practically controlled the politics of the county for several years. The delegates to the republican state convention were: A. L. Deming, Thomas Tostevin, Frank Street, J. C. Layton, and George J. Reed. May 2d, C. C. Cole delivered a Union address before a large assemblage of citizens at the court room. A number of other speeches were delivered on both sides during the campaign. The election resulted in favor of the republicans by about one hundred and sixty majority. For governor, the votes were: Stone, 463; Tuttle, 317. For senator: Ross, 461; Clinton, 324. For representative: A. J. Bell, 471; Winchester, 300. The county officers elected were: Treasurer, Thomas Tostevin; sheriff, Cornelius Voorhis; county judge, A. Jackson; surveyor, David Tostevin; superintendent of schools, L. S. Axtell. The total vote in the county was 780, which was increased to about 1000 by the soldiers' vote.

To avoid a draft which was threatened this fall, great exertions were made to fill up the quota of troops required from the county. Large subscriptions were made by private individuals, and the city council passed a resolution to pay each recruit for Kane township at the rate of twenty dollars per month for married men and ten dollars per month for single men during the time they were in the service.

Daily and weekly editions of the *Bugle* and *Nonpareil* were issued this year, but generally they were singularly devoid of items of local interest. The news from the seat of war were the principal items of importance for the people. Burke, of the *Nonpareil*, and Col. Babbitt, of the *Bugle*, were exceedingly bitter and acrimonious in their discussions, and accused each other of nearly all the crimes in the decalogue. Col. Babbitt, previous to the election, took the stump, and argued before the people on the unconstitutionality and folly of this "wicked war."

Horse races, shooting matches, and theatres, interspersed with festivals, balls, and dances, filled up the leisure time of the people of Council Bluffs, and the year 1863 closed with fine sleighing, which was duly improved by all who could command a horse and sleigh for that purpose.

January 4th, 1864. — The following new members took their seats in the Board of Supervisors: E. McBride, from Kane; J. C. Layton, from Centre; John Smith, from Grove; Charles Shields, from Macedonia; and G. W. Johnson, from York. William Lyman was elected chairman. February 26th, the sum of two thousand dollars was appropriated and placed in the hands of C. Baldwin, to be used at one hundred dollars per man in raising twenty volunteers to save the county from a draft. In June large appropriations were made for the benefit of families of soldiers, under the law of the general assembly authorizing the same. The taxes this year were: State, two mills; county, four; schools, one; relief, two and a half, and bounty one and a half mills.

At the city election in Council Bluffs in March, the re-

publicans nominated a full ticket for city and school officers, and elected all of their nominees by an average majority of nearly one hundred. The successful men were: Mayor, N. S. Bates; recorder, T. P. Treynor; marshal, A. J. Bump; treasurer, N. P. Dodge; assessor, F. A. Burke; aldermen — A. W. Smith, G. F. Smith, R. L. Douglas, D. F. Arnold, and Frank Street. School officers: President, D. C. Bloomer; vice president, T. P. Treynor; secretary, W. F. Kiter; treasurer, David De Vol; director, D. B. Clark. This was the first time the republicans had been in possession of the city government since its organization. Mr. Bates, who was elected mayor, was well known throughout the center of the state as an old employe of the Western Stage Company, having served it as mail carrier, stage driver, and local agent for over thirty years.

At the school election this year, a tax of two mills on the dollar was voted to build a school house in the first ward. The work was commenced early in the season, and the building, since known as the Stutsman street school house, was completed in time for the opening of school late in the fall. William Ward was architect, and G. F. Smith contractor. It cost about five thousand dollars, and was the first school house erected in Council Bluffs. It afforded sitings for about two hundred and twenty pupils.

Fairview Cemetery Association was organized this summer. Its first directors were: Horace Everett, Samuel Jacobs, J. P. Casady, J. M. Palmer, and John Hammer. The title to the old Mormon cemetery, on the high bluff northeast of the city, was secured, a considerable tract of land added to it, the entire grounds fenced and surveyed off into burial lots, and offered at public sale. In subsequent years this cemetery has been greatly improved. It occupies a commanding situation, as it overlooks not only the city of Council Bluffs, but the country around for a long distance, including the broad valley of the Missouri, the winding course of the river through it, and the city of Omaha on its western banks.

The Walnut Cemetery Association was also organized this year, a beautiful tract of land purchased by it in the eastern part of the city, fenced, laid out in lots, and otherwise improved. Just east of this latter tract the Catholic cemetery is located. It is handsomely arranged and adorned with a goodly number of tasteful memorials of the dead.

In April a soldiers' festival was held in Palmer Hall to welcome Capt. Edwards, and other officers and men then in the city on temporary absence from their regiments. In the same month George Francis Train made his first appearance in the city and delivered an address in the same place, the proceeds going for the benefit of the Soldiers' Aid Society. His speech was ridiculed by the *Nonpareil*, and Train after that time never manifested any great love for Council Bluffs.

In July the semi-annual statement of the State Bank was published, showing amount of deposits to be \$48,000; circulation, \$79,000; loans, \$85,800; gold and silver, \$22,000. This month the stages of the Western Stage Company first began to run to Panora in connection with the Cedar Rapids railroad — distance one hundred and sixty miles. Sales of real estate in the city and of land through the county began to be made about this time, the first to any extent for four or five years. People began once more to talk and think about railroads. Marshal Turley delivered a lecture reviving hopes long dormant of coming prosperity.

June 5th, the southwestern part of the county was visited by a severe hail storm doing a great deal of damage to buildings, crops, etc. August 2d, Mabie's menagerie tent, which was at the time exhibiting in Council Bluffs, was blown down by a sudden storm of wind. It was filled with people, and as the lights were suddenly extinguished a scene of the wildest confusion followed. One of the lions on exhibition jumped out of his cage, which added wonderfully to the terror of the scene. Families were separated, and husbands were busy hunting for their wives, and parents for their children. Fortunately, the lion was soon secured,

and no serious results followed, except a terrible scare and the destruction of the tent covering, which was cut up and torn almost to shreds.

September 9th.— The capture of Atlanta and the victories of the armies under Sherman were celebrated with great demonstrations of joy in Council Bluffs. Nearly the entire city was illuminated, and there were processions, bonfires, firing of cannon, and speeches till a late hour of the night. On the 16th of the same month Gen. Dodge, who had been severely wounded before Atlanta, arrived, and was received by the citizens and escorted to his home.

In October, Wm. Marble, a citizen of Council Bluffs, was killed by the Indians at Plum Creek. His little son, Daniel, who was with him, narrowly escaped, and was restored to his mother.

This fall Messrs. S. S. Bayliss and George Parks began the erection of a large flouring mill on Mosquito Creek, on the site of the old Wick's Mill. Mr. Walker also commenced the erection of a distillery at Mynster's Spring.

During the fall of this year the militia of the county was organized into companies. The two companies in Council Bluffs were known as the "Flying Artillery," Capt. Tostevin, and the "Provost Guards," Capt. A. J. Bell.

The county fair was held October 24th, in the midst of a severe snow storm. The frost again came early this fall, greatly injuring the crops, and at the end of the year corn was sold at one dollar and ten cents, oats eighty cents, and wheat one dollar per bushel. Butter was forty cents per pound, and good hard wood ten dollars per cord.

This year the political canvass on the part of the friends of the national administration was almost entirely in the hands of the Union League, and but few public meetings were held. The democrats made very little exertion for their candidates. Col. Babbitt, who still conducted the *Bugle*, was evidently disgusted with the nomination of a Union general by his party for president, and the columns of his paper, now lying before me, are singularly devoid of

the force, and party vim, and bitterness, which characterized them the year previous. The vote in the county was 502 for Lincoln, and 353 for McClellan. W. G. Crawford and E. F. Burdick were elected recorder and clerk of the court without serious opposition. The evening before the election the republicans had made extensive preparations for a grand procession with torches, banners, &c., but a great snow storm came on that evening which broke up the display, and the banners and torches were used to celebrate the result after the election.

During the last days of this year an earnest and patriotic effort was made throughout the county to collect contributions for soldiers' families. A soldiers' festival was held, at which four hundred and seven dollars were raised, and the German Theatre in Council Bluffs gave one hundred and seven dollars. In addition to these amounts, other collections both in the city and townships were made, which raised the cash collections to fourteen hundred and six dollars and fifty-five cents, and the donations in provisions and clothing increased the total to over two thousand dollars. The largest amount contributed by one person was one hundred and twenty-five dollars, by Mr. Samuel Haas. The money was placed in the hands of a committee, consisting of D. C. Bloomer, Thomas Officer, and C. Baldwin, for distribution.

The regular session of the Board of Supervisors commenced on the 2d of January, 1865, and organized by the appointment of Edward McBride chairman. The new members were: I. M. Sigler, from Boomer; Perry Reel, from Crescent; L. J. Childs, from York; J. Branke, from Rockyford; J. L. Fetter, from James; and J. A. Sinclair, from Knox. The Board took steps at this session to bring all the swamp lands in the county into market, and appointed I. M. Sigler, A. Jackson, and Hardin Jones, to appraise them. June 6th, L. S. Axtell resigned the office of superintendent of schools, and A. E. Clarendon was appointed in his place. C. Vorhis resigned as sheriff, and H. H. Field elected by the Board to fill the vacancy. June 8th, H. T.

Clarke was granted a license to keep a ferry across the Missouri river at Trader's Point. At this June session nearly four thousand dollars were appropriated for the construction of bridges in different parts of the county. The Board resolved to submit the question of building a new court house to the electors of the county. The proposition having received a majority of votes at the October election, a committee was appointed at the October session to procure plans for the erection of the building. The swamp lands were ordered to be sold to the highest bidders in January following.

The charter election in March in Council Bluffs was not seriously contested, and the following officers were elected: N. S. Bates, mayor; T. P. Treynor, recorder; H. P. Warren, treasurer; A. J. Bump, marshal; and O. P. Sherradin, assessor; aldermen—H. H. Field, Richard Rogers, C. P. Johnson, J. M. Phillips, Thomas Jefferies, and John Hammer. At the school election held on the same day, a tax was voted for the erection of a brick school house in the fourth ward. It was located, by the school board, on the corner of Willow and Marcy streets, and is now known as the Willow street school house. The building was erected in the course of the following summer and fall by Mr. Johnson, contractor, Mr. Ward being the architect. It cost, including the lots, about eight thousand dollars, and furnishes seats for two hundred pupils.

The announcement of the assassination of President Lincoln, and the nearly fatal assault on Secretary Seward, on Saturday morning, the 15th of April, produced a great sensation in Council Bluffs. Business was suspended; the mayor issued a proclamation recommending that places of business be closed and the bells tolled, which was generally complied with. The people thronged the streets, and could think or talk of nothing else. In the afternoon a numerous meeting of the Union League was held, at which resolutions laudatory of the deceased president, and denouncing his murderer, were adopted. Later in the day, on the report that some

expressions of satisfaction over the result had fallen from a resident, some demonstrations were made towards the forcible expulsion of the offender from the city, but, fortunately, better counsels prevailed, and no disturbance of the peace occurred. On the following Wednesday, being the day on which the funeral exercises of the lamented president were observed, in Washington, business was again, by common consent, suspended, the bells tolled, minute guns fired, and a large meeting held in the Congregational church, which was addressed by a number of the most prominent citizens.

The Rev. F. Byllesby resigned the rectorship of the Episcopal Church in April, and was succeeded in July following by the Rev. John Chamberlain.

The Presbyterian Church, Rev. James H. Clark pastor, recommenced during the summer the work on its new brick church edifice begun in 1858, and successfully carried it forward to completion. The members contributed with great liberality toward the object, and were generously aided by many not directly connected with the congregation. A fair held by the ladies of this church on the 21st and 22d of December, 1865, proved very successful, the total receipts exceeding fourteen hundred dollars. The total cost of this fine church was seventeen thousand two hundred and seventy dollars, of which sum eighteen hundred and ninety-three dollars were raised through the efforts of the ladies of the society.

May 16th, the last meeting of the Soldiers' Aid Society was held, and its business brought to a close. Its receipts from December, 1864, to the date of its dissolution, amounted to five hundred and four dollars and fifteen cents, all of which had been sent to the Christian Commission and the Chicago fair. Of the receipts, seventy-nine dollars and twenty-eight cents had been derived from a course of lectures delivered during the previous winter.

The celebration of the Fourth of July this year in Council Bluffs was the largest demonstration that had ever been witnessed in western Iowa. From three to four thousand

people were in attendance from this and adjoining counties. The procession was nearly a mile in length, and made a very fine appearance. The military, consisting of the Council Bluffs Light Artillery, Rifles, Provost Guards, and the Botany Tigers, was under command of Col. Hoffmayr. A hook and ladder company from Omaha was also in line. A large open carriage was filled with a group of little girls dressed in white, and each wearing a blue sash upon which was pinned a ribbon bearing in gold the name of a state or territory. In the centre of the group was the Goddess of Liberty with appropriate dress and cap. The religious exercises in the grove were conducted by Reverends J. H. Clark and H. H. O'Neal, the Declaration was read by C. H. Street, and addresses were delivered by A. J. Bell, Frank Street, W. G. Crawford, W. F. Sapp, and D. C. Bloomer. The toasts were read by Judge Baldwin. On the stage were placed the mothers and widows of deceased soldiers, while directly in front were the returned soldiers, the firemen, and a large number of citizens. Dinner was furnished free to all. The weather was auspicious, and the celebration closed with a fine display of fireworks from one of the bluffs. Although the celebration was gotten up by the Union men in commemoration of the close of the war, yet it was participated in by all classes and by all parties.

Quite a number of bold robberies were committed this summer in and around the city. Persons were waylaid on the roads and in the fields and compelled to deliver up their money and other valuables. All efforts to discover the offenders proved futile until the latter part of July, when George Parks found a person on the road whom he suspected of being one of the robbers, and who, revolver in hand, he compelled to march into town ahead of the horse he was riding. Being identified as the man who had compelled a farmer from the country, a few days previous, to deliver up his wallet, he was taken in hand by the vigilance committee, and his dead body was found a few mornings after suspended from the limb of a tree in the upper part of the city.

This summary punishment brought this class of crimes to an end for some months after.

This summer, work was commenced on the Union Pacific railroad at Omaha. The line of the road was at first located to run nearly due west from that place until it entered the valley of the Platte. After a considerable sum had been expended in grading on this route, it was determined to change it so as to run south ten or twelve miles before starting on its long trip westward. This was called the "Ox Bow" route, and the subject excited a great deal of interest both in Council Bluffs and Omaha, as this location was deemed to be prejudicial to the interests of both towns. Public meetings were held, and every possible effort was made to induce the company to stick to the route first adopted, but all of no avail. The "Ox Bow" was a finality; on it the road was constructed, and is still operated. No injurious results either to Council Bluffs or Omaha are believed to have followed, except to make the journey to the west ten or twelve miles longer.

In August the Council Bluffs branch of the State Bank of Iowa was changed into the First National Bank of Council Bluffs. A. L. Deming was, at the time, president, and Mr. H. Deming cashier. This institution, the first organized bank in the county, was first established in 1860. Horace Everett was its first president, and John D. Lockwood its first cashier. It has enjoyed a good share of public confidence.

On the evening of the 21st of September a reception and banquet was given to the returned officers and soldiers of the war. About three hundred were present, and the affair passed off quite pleasantly.

A post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized this year, and continued in existence for several years. The Union League also continued its meetings during this and the following year.

The state census taken this year (1865) gave the population of the county by townships, as follows: Kane, 3,003;

Silver Creek, 116; Macedonia, 94; Grove, 201; Walnut Creek, 130; Center, 220; James, 139; Knox, 223; York, 107; Crescent, 504; Boomer, 213; Rockyford, 428 — total, 4,588. The number of dwelling houses in the county was 904. Bushels of wheat harvested, 54,694, and of corn 220,412. Number of school houses in the county, 36; value, \$16,035. Number of schools in the county, 46; average attendance of pupils at same, 948.

This fall the city and county transferred its stock in the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph railroad to Willis Phelps, of Springfield, Massachusetts, on condition that he should complete the road to the state line by the first of January, 1867. A settlement was also arranged with Mr. Hendrie, of Burlington, by which he surrendered up his contract for the construction of the road. Soon after this contract was completed, the contractor, Mr. Henry W. Phelps, arrived, and entered vigorously upon the work. The officers of the company, at this time, were: R. L. Douglas, president; J. P. Casady, vice president; Horace Everett, treasurer; and Samuel Jacobs, secretary.

The fair of the Western Iowa Agricultural Society was held in September in Council Bluffs. It was fairly attended, but did not prove a very great success. The summer had been unfavorable for a large display of farming products, and the early day at which it was held was also unfortunate for its success. The county fair, which took place in November, was held in the midst of a big snow storm.

The republicans elected their entire county ticket this year without any serious contest. The list was as follows: Representative, W. F. Sapp; treasurer, Thomas Tostevin; sheriff, H. H. Field; surveyor, David Tostevin; coroner, Joseph Bolden; superintendent of schools, A. E. Clarendon; drainage commissioner, Joseph C. Layton. I cannot find any record of the vote received by the candidates either in the newspapers published in the county or in the clerk's office. In the Tribune Almanac I find that for governor it was as follows: For Stone, 490; for Benton, 435.

General Benton had formerly been a resident of the county, and ran a good many votes ahead of his ticket. The question of negro suffrage was largely discussed during the canvass, and was denounced in bitter terms in the columns of the *Bugle*, which paper only gave a very mild support to the regular anti-administration ticket.

At the January meeting in 1866 of the Board of Supervisors the following new members took their seats: York, J. Ellis; Silver Creek, Wooster Fay; Center, J. M. Strong; Walnut, Simeon Wright; Grove, John Smith; Kane, E. McBride. Mr. J. L. Fetter, of James township, was elected chairman. The committee on the construction of a new court house reported a plan and estimates for the new building, and the Board, on the 5th of January, purchased a site on which to erect it on the corner of Pearl and Buckingham streets, in Council Bluffs, at a cost of thirty-five hundred dollars in county orders. J. M. Phillips, J. P. Casady, Thomas Officer, and Wm. Ward, were appointed commissioners, and on the 15th of February, 1866, the contract for the erection of the court house was let to John Hammer and C. Johnson for forty-two thousand dollars, Mr. Ward having immediate charge of the work as superintendent and architect. The old court house lot on Broadway was sold for twenty-three hundred and ninety dollars in cash. It had cost the county sixty-five hundred dollars when purchased in 1857. The bonds of the county were issued to defray the expenses of the new building, a special tax having been vote to meet the interest and to form a sinking fund for the redemption of the principal. Messrs. Hammer and Johnson commenced work early in the summer on their contract, and by the following winter the stone foundation and basement story were nearly completed. No other important matters engaged the attention of the Board this year. At the September session it was resolved to submit to the electors of the county at the October election the question of an additional tax of four mills for county purposes. The vote of the people resulted in a large majority against it.

On the morning of the 18th of February, 1866, a row of buildings, situated on Broadway, in Council Bluffs, were destroyed by fire. They had all been occupied as stores and shops, and were owned by J. M. Phillips, S. Knepper, John Epentes, and Keller & Bennett. A portion of the contents were saved, but the entire loss amounted to about fifteen thousand dollars, over one half of which was covered by insurance. The weather at this time was intensely cold, and only the favorable direction of the wind saved a number of other buildings from being burned. Very soon after the occurrence of this fire the first city ordinance was passed establishing fire limits in the city. It was, of course, confined to Broadway, but has been largely extended in subsequent years.

March 12th, 1866.—The city election resulted in the success of the entire republican ticket, as follows: Mayor, Caleb Baldwin; recorder, T. P. Treynor; treasurer, H. P. Warren; marshal, A. J. Bump; assessor, J. S. Strete; aldermen — Charles Buch, J. P. Williams, R. L. Douglass, N. S. Bates, and E. Knabe. The school officers chosen on the same day were: D. C. Bloomer, president; C. L. D. Crockwell, vice president; J. W. Morse, secretary; P. C. De Vol, treasurer; Wm. Armstrong, director. A tax was voted to build another school house, which was located in the second ward.

This spring a deep religious feeling was manifested in the city, and the meetings in the different churches were largely attended. A union prayer meeting was held for about two months, commencing at eight o'clock in the morning each day for the convenience of business men. The additions to the churches were quite numerous.

A Young Men's Library Association was organized this spring, and a considerable library gathered during the following months. W. H. M. Pusey was president of the Association, C. H. Street secretary, and F. M. Streamer librarian. Mr. Pusey generously furnished a room for the use of the library free of charge.

The Board of Trade organized in February, and was in active operation during this and two or three following years. A. L. Deming was its first president, and the association did a great deal of good towards advancing the material interests of the city. Its rooms were frequently resorted to by business men for mutual consultation. T. J. Harford was its second president, selected in the beginning of 1867.

Great surprise and grief were brought upon the religious sentiment of the city towards the close of the spring months this year by the [discovery that the Rev. James H. Clark, who had been esteemed as a most estimable and successful pastor, had been guilty of indelicate and improper conduct towards some young girls, while visiting his study for religious instruction. When the exposure came out he promptly confessed his offense, resigned his charge, and left the county.

Burhop's Hall, which had been commenced the previous fall, was completed this spring, and opened with a grand ball on the 22d of June. For several years this was the only public hall in the city, and was therefore in almost constant use for concerts, theatres, and all kinds of public meetings. In late years it has been supplied with a gallery, handsomely seated, and provided with all the appliances of a well arranged opera house.

The second ward school house was completed late in the summer, making the third school building erected in the city. It cost about six thousand dollars, exclusive of the lots, and furnishes seats for one hundred and fifty pupils.

This summer the Rev. Thomas H. Cleland, then fresh from his theological studies, took charge of the Presbyterian Church in Council Bluffs. Although the post seemed a highly responsible one for so young a man, yet he has proved a most acceptable and efficient pastor, and at the end of seven years remains in the same field of duty.

On the 14th of June the corner-stone of the new Methodist Episcopal Church was laid, and the contract let to

Messrs. John Hammer and G. F. Smith for its construction. From this time the work went vigorously forward, and very soon the walls of the largest and finest church yet erected in Council Bluffs began to make their appearance. Standing in a prominent position at the intersection of Broadway and Madison streets, this church attracts the attention of all who visit the city, by its tasteful proportions, and by the signs of solidity and architectural skill that mark the structure. It was completed during the following year, at a cost of _____ dollars, and besides being a large and commodious place of worship, is also an honor to the public spirit and enterprise of the denomination in this city to which it belongs.

During the early months of this year, the progress of the Cedar Rapids & Missouri River railroad towards completion to the Missouri was very rapid, and the question as to the point where it would strike the river was one which excited a great deal of interest. Although the people of Council Bluffs professed entire confidence that it would come to their city, yet this did not prevent them from putting forth such efforts as were in their power to secure that desirable end. Various committees were appointed by the Board of Trade charged with the consideration of the matter, and the community was kept in a state of uncertainty on the subject, which was extremely tantalizing. Finally, in July, several of the leading officers of the road visited the city and made a definite proposition, that if thirty thousand dollars and the right of way through the county were donated to them, they would guarantee that the road should be built to Council Bluffs. A meeting was therefore held on the evening of the 9th of July to take the proposition into consideration. It was attended by nearly all the business men of the town. The proposition was discussed and accepted, and over thirty thousand dollars in cash pledged on the spot. Besides, Marshal Turley donated eighty acres for depot grounds, and a number of additional donations were made within a few days after. These sums were nearly all

paid within the following year or two, although the conviction soon became general, on the part of nearly all, that this large donation was wholly unnecessary, the railroad managers having, it is believed, previously determined to construct their road to Council Bluffs. At any rate, the work went rapidly forward. September 14th ground was first broken for it in Council Bluffs in the presence of a large number of people, and its first locomotive reached the city on the 22d of January, 1867. The occasion was duly and joyfully celebrated. Cannon were fired, a procession marched out to the depot grounds and back again, and speeches were made by Mayor Baldwin and a number of other citizens. Telegrams were also sent to the mayors of Chicago, St. Louis, and other leading citizens, and suitable replies received. Thus, at last, the long waiting for a railroad was ended, and persons could thenceforth make the journey across the state without first securing seats in the coaches of the Western Stage Company. The stage driver's horn was henceforth to be no more heard among the bluffs of the Missouri, for the shrill whistle of the locomotive was to take its place.

The work on the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph railroad went steadily forward this season under the arrangement made with Mr. Willis Phelps the previous year. In September a locomotive was brought up the river and placed on a portion of the finished road in Mills county, and the work then went more rapidly forward, and the first construction train reached the round-house of the company in Council Bluffs on the 27th of December, 1866. As this was the first railroad locomotive that had ever made its appearance in the town, it of course was the observed of all observers, and was visited by nearly the entire population during the next few days.

From January, 1866, to October, 1867, the Council Bluffs *Bugle* was published by Mr. W. T. Giles. I have been unable, after diligent search, to find a file of this paper during this period in the community. This I deeply regret, as a

newspaper is a priceless fountain of information for any one who is engaged in studying the past history of our state. Mr. W. S. Burke continued to publish the *Nonpareil* until the 22d of December, 1866, when he gave place to Messrs. W. W. Maynard and John W. Chapman, who then became its editors and proprietors. Maynard was well known as an editor and publisher. Mr. Chapman had then resided in the county but a short time, but his subsequent career has marked him as a man of energy and ability.

The political canvass in the county was conducted with a good deal of spirit. Gen. G. M. Dodge was nominated for congress by the republicans, after a severe and bitter contest, over J. A. Kasson. Dodge and Kasson had formerly been strong personal friends, but on this occasion found themselves pitted against each other. Gen. Tuttle was the opposing candidate. He visited the county in September and addressed the people. Addresses were also delivered by Gov. Kirkwood, Judge Nourse, and several others of each party. At the election in November the whole number of votes in the county was thirteen hundred and forty-two, and the average republican majority was about one hundred. W. G. Crawford was re-elected recorder, and E. F. Burdick clerk of the courts. The republicans celebrated their victory in the old way, by a torchlight procession, music, firing of cannon, and speeches.

During the summer the Johnson peace convention, held in Philadelphia, was attended by Messrs. Test and Larimer, of Council Bluffs, as delegates from this congressional district. While they were absent, Burke published in the *Nonpareil* an amusing telegram purporting to come from Test, announcing that he should return home in a few days accompanied by the President, and requesting that suitable arrangements should be made for their reception!

On the first of December the old Cottonwood jail was destroyed by fire. A man named Piling, who had been placed in it on the previous evening was also burned up with it. A large number of persons witnessed the burning, but no one

suspected that it contained a human being until his charred remains were found the next morning.

In November the electors of the city decided, at a special election held for that purpose, to authorize the city council to borrow sixty thousand dollars on the bonds of the city for various purposes of internal improvements, the purchase of fire apparatus, and a market house. Under the last clause the council purchased, in December, of S. H. Riddle, the brick building, with the lot on which it stood, erected in 1857 by Col. Benton for a banking office, paying seven thousand dollars for it in city bonds. It has since been known as the "City Building," and is used for offices for the various city officials and for meetings of the city council, and also for a city prison.

On the week preceding Christmas the ladies of the Episcopal Church held a most successful fair in Burhop's Hall. The times were then good and money comparatively plenty, and the ladies were therefore enabled to realize nearly a thousand dollars as the fruits of their labors on this occasion. The total receipts of the fair were nearly fifteen hundred dollars.

Indeed, this entire year may be noted as one of decided prosperity for the city of Council Bluffs. The rapid progress made in the construction of the Northwestern and Southern railroads and of the Union Pacific railroad, and the now sure prospect that at least two more railroads would be built to this point within a few years, all tended to greatly advance the value of property and stimulate speculation. A number of new buildings were erected, both for business purposes and private dwellings, including in the latter five residences by Dr. P. J. McMahon and J. P. Casady, and the people generally congratulated themselves upon the rapid increase of the town in population and wealth. Mechanical labor of all kinds had been in great demand and was well paid.

Copyright of *Annals of Iowa* is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.